

Washington State Commission on African American Affairs

2007-09 Strategic Plan

Our Mission:

Our agency exists to provide advice and recommendations to the Governor and Legislature on public policies that affect the African American people of Washington State. Our statutory authority derives from RCW 43.113.

Our Goals for 2007-2009:

In the new biennium, we will continue expanding our work in pursuit of three goals set for the agency during a June 2005 Summit where our strategic plan was reviewed and clarified.

Here are our top three goals for the first term of Gov. Gregoire's administration:

Goal #1 -- Build relationships in the Black community and in State Government

Strategies:

- 1) Meet and build rapport with the Governor's Executive Policy staff working on education, health care, children and family services, civil rights, and criminal justice.
- 2) Meet and build rapport with relevant staff in state agencies, especially in DSHS, OSPI, the State Patrol, WSDOT, DOC, the Traffic Safety Commission, the State Board for Community and Technical Education, and the Workforce Training and Coordinating Board, and Employment Security Department.
- 3) Meet and build rapport with leaders of community-based organizations and their members. Organizations of special interest are: African-American-owned media; the Seattle, Tacoma, Bremerton, and Vancouver NAACP branches; the statewide leadership of the NAACP; the Urban Leagues of Tacoma and Seattle; the YWCAs of Seattle and Tacoma; the Central Area Motivation Program; the Komen Foundation Communities of Caring; the Casey Family Foundation; the Breakfast Group; the Links; Tabor 100; the Coalition for Contracts and Jobs; the Black Entrepreneurs of Clark County; the Central Area Chamber of Commerce; Blacks in Government, the Tacoma-Pierce County Black Collective, various ministerial alliances, and others.
- 4) Collaborate with our counterparts serving on the other ethnic commissions. This includes:
 - a. Developing new collaborative events similar to the 2005 Diversity Health Summit
 - b. Co-sponsoring the annual Legislative Reception
 - c. Cover speaking and public appearance engagements for each other as needed
 - d. Co-sponsoring the annual African American Legislative Day

- 5) Expand our reach by building a team of knowledgeable policy advisors from the community, and a team of volunteers to support events and outreach activities.
 - a. The Commission has established topical subcommittees that will begin meeting in the community during this biennium.
 - b. Community members with expertise in various policy areas will be invited to join these committees as volunteer advisors to the Commission.
- 6) Engage the Black community at-large by being visible. This includes:
 - a. Hosting town hall meetings and public forums on policy issues
 - b. Delivering innumerable speeches and presentations at community events
 - c. Participating in parades, ethnic fests, town hall meetings, and public forums
- 7) Build working relationships with faith-based leaders and their congregants
 - a. Establish an African American Pastor's Policy Council by June 2007 to further engage the faith community in education and health issues
 - b. Visit all African American churches at least once by June 2007
 - c. Compile a comprehensive list of churches and pastors by December 2007
 - d. Invite church pastors to participate in policy dialogues and events associated with the Legislative and administrative policy process

Goal #2 -- Enhance our Information Infrastructure to increase our effectiveness within the bounds of our limited resources

Strategies:

- 1) Establish and populate a constituent database.
 - a. Continue securing available lists of African Americans from various sources
 - b. Use contractors to do key entry of innumerable business cards and registration forms collected during community outreach work
 - c. Maintain records currency and accuracy as staff resources allow
 - d. Use the database to refer agencies to resources in the Black community and to refer members of the community to resources in state government

Note: In June 2005, the total constituent records stored at the Commission were 300 email addresses in the ListServ. At the time of this writing, the Commission has stored roughly 10,000 constituent records from various sources. Our goal is to continue growing this database using a SQL online tool created in June 2006 using Small Agency Technology Pool funds.

- 2) Use technology to broaden our reach into the community and enhance communication on policy issues.
 - a. Use broadcast emails to inform and engage the community on policy
 - b. Deepen and enrich our web content and rebuild our web presence
 - c. Use email and direct marketing techniques to drive activity to the website
 - d. Distribute reports and updates to the community on Gov. Gregoire's priority via email and via other methods
 - e. Distribute reports and updates to the community from the Commission via email and via other methods

Goal #3 -- Engage policy topics relevant to the community, ideally those that align with the Governor's priorities

Strategies:

- 1) Share community perspectives with the Governor's policy staff and agencies considering policy changes affecting the community.
- 2) Organize community forums and roundtable discussions to generate specific policy recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature in these areas:
 - Education
 - Health Care
 - Foster and Adoption Placement
- 3) Gather community input on proposed legislation and administrative policy changes forthcoming from Washington Learns and other "blue ribbon" groups directing policy changes in the administration.
- 4) Invite the community into the policy debate by hosting Town Hall events, doing presentations, and collaborating with advocacy organizations hosting similar activities.

Historical Note:

When the current director was appointed in June 2005, she was the fourth person to head the agency in a three-year timeframe. As of June 2005, the agency did have a website, but the content was limited and out of date. A broadcast email utility was in place, but it contained only 300 email addresses. No constituent database had been compiled, no archives of prior research or recommendations existed, and no record of partnerships, alliances, or relationships was kept. We hope to correct this during Gov. Gregoire's first term. This should ensure that the Commission can hold the ground it has gained in the last year and that new directors in future years will not be forced to rebuild relationships from ground level.

Pictorial Strategic Plan

